

Cheat Sheet: File Naming Standards

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Website: http://www1.nature.nps.gov/im/units/swan/index.cfm?theme=info_guidelines

Purpose: Provide a quick reference in file naming standards.

A. Within any file created, be sure the following is documented:

- Purpose
- Who wrote the document
- Date
- Last modified
- Control version by using date.

Example: The header for this "Cheat Sheet" provides an example.

B. Folder and file naming standards

- Keep names short if possible but make them meaningful and intuitive
- Avoid spaces, unusual characters (like % or & or /), or reserved words (like DATE) in both folder and file names. This is REQUIRED, WITH NO EXCEPTIONS.

1) Report File Names:

Required format: Report files should be named in the following manner:

AuthorLastNameFirstInitial_YEAR_ParkCode_BriefTitle_version.doc

Where:

AuthorLastName = The first author's last name or the agency office (i.e., AKRO)

FirstInitial = First initial of the first author.

YEAR = Four digit year of the publication date.

ParkCode = Four letter park code

BriefTitle = Provide a descriptive, but brief title. Concatenate with capital letters and no spaces.

Version = Date formatted as YYMMDD, where DD is optional.

For example: MillerJ_2003_ALAG_FreshFishReprt_0312.doc

2) Data:

Tabular data, such as MS Access databases, MS Excel spreadsheets, or others, should be named in the following manner:

ParkCode_Year_ShortDescrip_Stage_versiondate.mdb or .xls or .txt

ParkCode = Four letter park code

YEAR = Four digit year of the publication date.

ShortDescrip = Provide a descriptive, but brief title. Concatenate with capitol letters and no spaces.

Stage = Stage of the database.

For example:

- InDesign – The database is in design and no real data is included
- RAW – Contains only the raw data; no QA/QC procedures are done
- QAQC – Data has been in some state of QA/QC
- Finished – Data has completed all stages, but there still may be some versioning, which is controlled by date. Select the latest data for the most current database.

3) Image File Names:

Image files should be named in a the following manner, unless otherwise specified for a given project:

ParkCode_Year_ShortDescrip_SequenceNumber.xxx

For examples:

ANIA_2003_SurpriseLake_001.jpg

ANIA_2003_1000301.jpg (where the last few is digitally assigned.)

C. Making Exceptions:

There is no exception for the Report File Naming. On occasion, however, a different file naming strategy may be needed for data files or images. For example, it may be important to keep track of the author of data. In this case, you may find it more intuitive to use the Report Naming Standard. All names should indicate at a minimum which park, date, and subject. It should be easy to tell what is the most current dataset.

D. For more information:

This Cheat Sheet is a short summary of file naming standards. More detailed information can be found at the website:

http://www1.nature.nps.gov/im/units/swan/index.cfm?theme=info_guidelines